

Message Text

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ACTION H-03

INFO OCT-01 EUR-08 ISO-00 SS-07 NSC-06 AID-01 /026 W
-----191655Z 009813 /43

P R 191612Z APR 77
FM AMEMBASSY PARIS
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 1886
INFO AMCONSUL MARSEILLE

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E.O.11652: N/A
TAGS: OREP (RYAN, LEO J.)
SUBJECT: CONGRESSIONAL TRAVEL: CONGRESSMAN RYAN AND
HIS NON-VISIT TO PHENIX

REF: PARIS 10212

1. SUMMARY. CODEL RYAN TOGETHER WITH AMCONGEN RALPH MEIMA ARRIVED AT THE PHENIX REACTOR ON SCHEDULE ON APRIL 18. THE GUARD AT THE GATE TO THE PHENIX REACTOR COMPLEX DID NOT PERMIT CONGRESSMAN RYAN TO ENTER AS HE HAD NO REASONABLE FORM OF POSITIVE IDENTIFICATION. OTHER MEMBERS OF THE CODEL MADE A BRIEF TOUR OF THE PLANT. AFTER TWO HOURS AT THE SITE THE GROUP LEFT. THIS CABLE PRESENTS THE GENERAL FACTS OF THE SITUATION AS KNOWN TO THE EMBASSY BASED ON CONTRIBUTIONS BY AMCONGEN MEIMA AND THE INTERNATIONAL OFFICE OF THE FRENCH CEA IN PARIS. CONGRESSMAN RYAN INDICATED THAT HE WOULD TAKE UP THIS MATTER WITH APPROPRIATE AUTHORITIES IN WASHINGTON.

2. CODEL RYAN HAD ORIGINALLY REQUESTED A VISIT TO THE PHENIX REACTOR BE ARRANGED FOR SUNDAY, APRIL 17. AFTER TWO DISCUSSIONS WITH CEA, IT WAS DETERMINED THAT THIS WOULD NOT BE POSSIBLE. CODEL RYAN PUT BACK THEIR
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DEPARTURE FROM FRANCE ONE DAY AND THE TRIP WAS SCHEDULED FOR MONDAY, APRIL 18. A CAR FROM THE CEA FACILITY AT MARCOULE MET THE DELEGATION AT THEIR HOTEL IN MARSEILLE AT 8:30 A.M. AND, WITH AMCONGEN RALPH MEIMA IN HIS CAR, DROVE TO THE PHENIX FACILITY TWO HOURS NORTH OF MARSEILLE.

3. THE GROUP ARRIVED AT APPROXIMATELY 11:15 A.M. AT THE MAIN GATE TO THE PHENIX FACILITY AND IN ROUTINE FASHION WERE ASKED FOR IDENTIFICATION OF SOME FORM. APPARENTLY ALL BUT CONGRESSMAN RYAN COULD PROVIDE SOME FORM OF IDENTIFICATION; THE WASHINGTON VISITORS DID NOT HAVE THEIR PASSPORTS BUT DID HAVE WITH THEM A CONGRESSIONAL BUILDING PASS. CONGRESSMAN RYAN HAD ABSOLUTELY NO FORM OF IDENTIFICATION ON HIS PERSON; HE HAD LEFT HIS PASSPORT IN HIS HOTEL ROOM AT MARSEILLE. THE GUARD CALLED THE SECURITY OFFICE IN THE REACTOR BUILDING AND RECEIVED WORD THAT NO ONE WOULD BE ADMITTED WITHOUT SOME FORM OF IDENTIFICATION - THAT WAS THE RULE, THE RULE WOULD BE FOLLOWED AND EVEN THE AMCONGEN VOUCHING FOR THE IDENTITY OF CONGRESSMAN RYAN WOULD NOT BE ACCEPTED AS A SUBSTITUTE.

4. AFTER ABOUT THIRTY MINUTES OF WAITING WHILE THE SECURITY OFFICE APPARENTLY RECONSIDERED THE ISSUE, THE THREE OTHER MEMBERS OF THE CODEL WENT INTO THE PLANT FOR A TOUR. AMCONGEN MEIMA REMAINED WITH CONGRESSMAN RYAN AND CONTINUED HIS DISCUSSION WITH OFFICIALS OF THE SECURITY OFFICE AND LATER WITH THE PLANT MANAGER REQUESTING THAT CONGRESSMAN RYAN BE ADMITTED TO THE PLANT ON THE BASIS OF HIS VOUCHING FOR HIS PROPER IDENTITY. THE PLANT MANAGER STATED THAT THERE WOULD BE NO EXCEPTION TO THE RULE. AT ABOUT 12:20 P.M. CONGRESSMAN RYAN AND MR. MEIMA MET WITH SENIOR OFFICIALS OF THE PUBLIC RELATIONS OFFICE OF THE PLANT WHO TRIED TO EXPLAIN THE REASONS FOR THE REGULATIONS AND WHO LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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INVITED THE CODEL TO HAVE LUNCH AS GUESTS OF THE FACILITY AT A LOCAL QUALITY RESTAURANT.

5. AT APPROXIMATELY 1:00 P.M. THREE MEMBERS OF THE CODEL COMPLETED THEIR TOUR OF THE PLANT AND, WITH CONGRESSMAN RYAN, THE CODEL DECIDED NOT TO ACCEPT THE INVITATION TO LUNCH. THE GROUP THEN LEFT THE PLANT AND PROCEEDED SOUTH TOWARD MARSEILLE.

6. MONDAY MORNING, APRIL 18, EMBASSY SCICOUN SALMON HAPPENED TO BE VISITING CEA HEADQUARTERS ON OTHER BUSINESS WITH MEMBERS OF THE INTERNATIONAL STAFF. HE WAS ADVISED AT APPROXIMATELY 11:45 A.M. OF THE REPORT FROM THE PHENIX REACTOR THAT CONGRESSMAN RYAN HAD ARRIVED WITHOUT ANY FORM OF IDENTIFICATION AND THAT INITIALLY HE HAD NOT BEEN PERMITTED TO ENTER THE PLANT. OFFICIALS OF THE INTERNATIONAL OFFICE AT CEA ADVISED

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THEN THAT THEY HAD REQUESTED OFFICIALS AT THE PHENIX REACTOR TO PERMIT CONGRESSMAN RYAN'S ENTRY ON THE BASIS OF MR. MEIMA'S ASSURANCES. APPARENTLY, THE PHENIX PLANT SECURITY OFFICER IN HIS DISCUSSIONS WITH CEA HEADQUARTERS OFFICIALS GAVE THE IMPRESSION THAT HE FELT HIS SECURITY PROCEDURES WERE BEING TESTED BY THE CONGRESSMAN WHO HAD NO PIECE OF IDENTIFICATION WITH HIM. ON TUESDAY MORNING AT THE START OF BUSINESS, CEA DIRECTOR OF INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS, JEAN RENOU, CALLED THE EMBASSY SCICOUN TO REPORT THAT THE PLANT MANAGEMENT HAD NOT FOLLOWED THE REQUEST OF THE CEA HEADQUARTERS AND THAT CONGRESSMAN RYAN HAD NOT BEEN PERMITTED TO VISIT THE REACTOR. HE APOLOGIZED FOR THE INCIDENT AND HOPED THAT IN THE FUTURE VISITORS WOULD ARRIVE WITH PROPER IDENTIFICATION AND THAT SHOULD, FOR SOME UNFORESEEN REASON, VISITORS ARRIVE WITHOUT THEIR PASSPORT, THE SECURITY STAFF AT THE PHENIX FACILITY WOULD USE MORE SEASONED JUDGMENT IN COPING WITH SUCH SITUATIONS.

7. COMMENT. IT WOULD APPEAR, FROM OUR POINT OF VIEW, THAT THE SECURITY OFFICER AT THE PHENIX REACTOR DID NOT USE VERY SOUND JUDGMENT. HE HAD THE ADVICE FROM THE CEA
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HEADQUARTERS TO ADMIT THE CONGRESSMAN AND APPARENTLY
CHOSE TO RIGIDLY FOLLOW THE REGULATIONS AND NOT
PERMIT HIS ENTRY. HIS DECISION WAS UNFORTUNATE BUT NOT
OUTSIDE THE BOUNDS OF REGULATIONS AT THE PHENIX REACTOR
OR, FOR THAT FACT, AT ANY OTHER SENSITIVE NUCLEAR
INSTALLATION IN FRANCE OR IN THE US. IT IS A FRENCH
LAW THAT ANYONE MAY BE STOPPED ON THE STREET AND
REQUESTED TO PRODUCE IDENTIFICATION PAPERS, WHICH FOR
AN AMERICAN MAY BE HIS PASSPORT. FROM THE EMBASSY'S
POINT OF VIEW, AMCONGEN MEIMA DID ALL HE COULD NOT
ONLY TO MAKE CODEL RYAN'S THREE-DAY VISIT TO THE
MARSEILLE AREA INTERESTING AND ENJOYABLE; ALSO HE DID
HIS BEST TO OVERCOME THE UNFORTUNATE DECISION MADE BY
THE SECURITY OFFICER AT THE PHENIX FACILITY. WE
UNDERSTAND THAT CONGRESSMAN RYAN MAY WISH TO OBJECT TO
THE TREATMENT HE RECEIVED AT PHENIX AND TO "THE AFFRONT
TO THE U.S. CONSUL GENERAL MADE BY THE SECURITY OFFICER
AT THE PHENIX FACILITY" FOR NOT ACCEPTING HIS WORD AS
TO THE IDENTITY OF CONGRESSMAN RYAN. WE TRUST THAT THE
INFORMATION CONTAINED IN THIS CABLE IS TIMELY AND WILL
ASSIST THE DEPARTMENT IN COPING WITH THIS PROBLEM IF
IT PERSISTS.

HARLAN

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